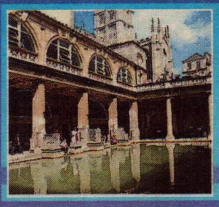
No 759 March 28, 2004

THE FUNDAY TIMES

One out of two
Declan talks to us about the new Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
Page 2

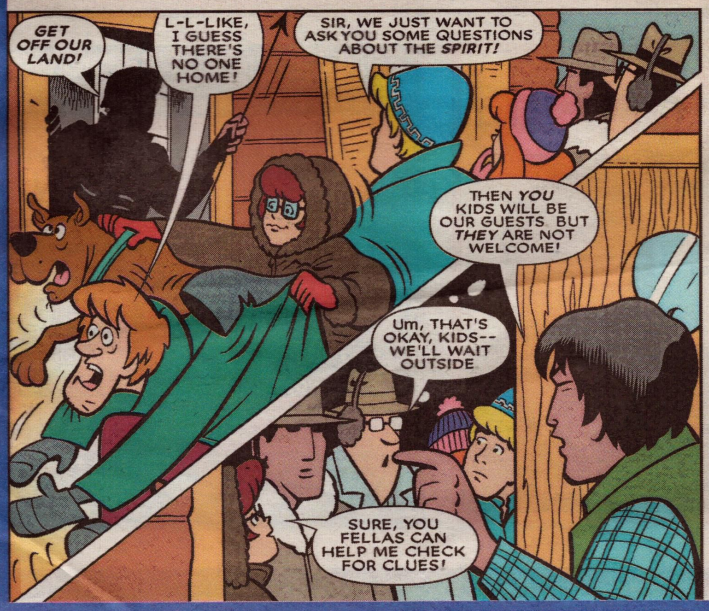


Dip into Bath
Funday travels to Bath to reveal the history of the city's Roman baths
Page 6

Win to watch
Enter our Good Boy! competition and have a chance of bagging a TV
Page 9

SCOOBY-DOO! in THE CASE OF THE COLD TRAIL

The story so far – Oil company employees have mysteriously vanished following the creepy appearance of a strange spirit



Continues next week!

TAKEAWAY TREAT

The Geordie duo's Saturday Night Takeaway is back, but are Ant & Dec off to America? Declan Donnelly chats to Adam Tanswell to set the record straight

Dec, is it true that both of you will be leaving the UK to conquer America with a new TV show?

No, not necessarily. We've done a new pilot show for a big US television company and they're looking at it at the moment. Before I'm A Celebrity ... Get Me Out Of Here!, we stopped off in LA on the way to Australia to meet the bosses. We don't want to sound ungrateful because it's very flattering that they've taken an interest in us, but America has never been something we've planned to do.

So you're not going to be leaving your British fans behind?

Well, we'll see what happens, but I don't know when or how we'd do it. We're really busy at the moment anyway. We know what we're doing for the rest of this year so if America happens, great – if it doesn't, it's fine.

What else have you got lined up this year then?

As well as this series of Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway, we've got another one in the autumn that will take us to the end of the year. We're setting up some sneaky fun filming ... so, if you've liked what you've seen so far, you're really going to enjoy these two series.

Is it true you used to be Peter Andre's neighbour?

Yes, he lived above me and Ant back in 1995. He was alright as a neighbour actually. We could hear him singing and listening to music – it was usually all his own stuff! Sometimes we used to shout at him to shut up, but it was all good-natured.

Is there going to be another series of Pop Idol this year?

I don't know to be honest. We certainly haven't been asked to do it. I think we have to have a break after Pop Idol I and II, Fame Academy I and II and Popstars: The Rivals. There's only a certain amount of people in the talent pool between 16 and 26 – it's got to fill up again.

How long do you think that will take?

I don't know. We'd seen people on Pop Idol II that we'd seen on Pop Idol I and on Fame Academy – it'll be nice to leave it for a while so that some new faces can appear on the scene. There might be one big problem though – Simon Cowell said he wouldn't do another series.

Maybe you should throw him into the jungle next time!

That would be great! I don't know if anyone could face doing a bushtucker trial every day, though, because that's what would happen if Simon Cowell was there. He'd be fantastic in the jungle. The next series of I'm A Celebrity ... Get Me Out Of Here! is being set up for November, so maybe then? We'll have to wait and see.

Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway is on ITV1, Saturdays, at 7.10pm

COVER CARTOON SCOOBY-DOO AND ALL RELATED CHARACTERS AND ELEMENTS ARE TRADEMARKS OF AND © HANNA-BARBERA (S04)

HELLO EVERYONE!

Take a journey back in time with Funday and The Month this week – our destination is the heyday of the Roman Empire. On our centre spread, you can find out about the famous Roman baths in Bath and discover why taking a dip was part of everyone's social life in those days.

For an interactive Roman treat, get your hands on The Month CD-Rom that's in today's paper – and click your way to the Kids zone. There, you'll find our fab feature all about life in a Roman villa. You can also find out what growing up in that era would have been like.

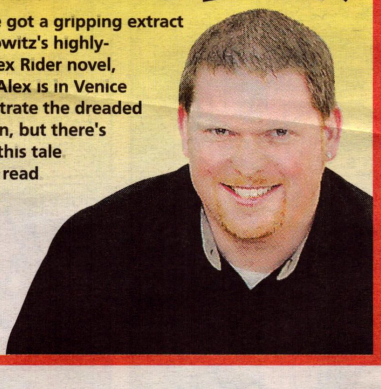
It's also an extra special week because on page 5 today we've got a gripping extract from Anthony Horowitz's highly-anticipated new Alex Rider novel, Scorpia. This time, Alex is in Venice where he must infiltrate the dreaded Scorpia organisation, but there's a monster twist to this tale.

Enjoy our exclusive read.

Have a great week,

Dave

Dave, editor



THE FUNDAY TIMES

COMPETITIONS

Send answers to all competitions to us at: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU95 1AY or funday.comps@sunday-times.co.uk [only one e-mail per entrant please]

Competition deadline: April 7

Entrants to Funday competitions must be 16 and under.

F-MAIL

Send your letters, cartoons, jokes and drawings to: The Funday Times, PO Box 5073, Leighton Buzzard LU7 7GX or funday.times@sunday-times.co.uk

NOT RECEIVED YOUR PRIZE?

Please telephone 020 7711 1521 or e-mail custserv@fundaytimes.co.uk

GOT A NEWS STORY?

Please telephone 020 7782 7415 or e-mail funday.news@sunday-times.co.uk

PICTURES ©ITV COVER PICTURE ©ITV

7 DAYS

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD THIS WEEK

TODAY

It's British Summer Time! Put your clocks forward today by one hour and enjoy the lighter evenings • Britain declared war on Russia, starting the Crimean War, 150 years ago • Construction begins on the new £1.1bn Beijing airport terminal, designed by British architect Norman Foster

MONDAY

It was 30 years ago that America's space probe Mariner 10 sent back the first close-up pictures of Mercury • The UK's first overnight playcentre opens at Jumping Jacks in Wigton, Cumbria. Kids sleep in dormitories and parents can leave their children for up to a week • A total ban on smoking in the workplace [including pubs and restaurants] takes effect in the Republic of Ireland

TUESDAY

The internationally renowned Dance Theatre of Harlem begins its run of mixed-programme shows [until April 10] at Sadler's Wells in London • Qibla Cola, already on sale in the UK, Canada, the Netherlands and Norway, launches in Pakistan. The brand claims to be an ethical alternative to other colas and donates 10% of its net profit to humanitarian causes around the world. Qibla is set to be launched in the US soon

WEDNESDAY

The Adventures of Tintin at Sea exhibition opens at the National Maritime Museum, in Greenwich, celebrating 75 years of Tintin adventures • Euro Disney SCA, the company that runs Disneyland Resort Paris, must find a solution to its €2.2bn debt crisis by today. Despite being Europe's most popular tourist attraction, the economic crisis in Europe during 2003 seriously affected park attendance

THURSDAY

The Police Complaints Authority is replaced by a new body, called the Independent Police Complaints Commission, which will monitor and review procedures for dealing with police misconduct • National Circus Day celebrates the joys of the big top with a parade in central London • The price of second class stamps goes up from 20p to 21p today, first class stamps remain 28p • Britain's original bad girl of fashion, Vivienne Westwood [above], displays more than 150 outfits in a retrospective at the Victoria and Albert Museum

FRIDAY

Genesis, Nasa's robotic space explorer which launched in July 2001, finishes collecting solar wind. By now, Genesis should have about 10 to 20 micrograms of the solar wind, which is made up of invisible charged particles expelled by the Sun. The samples, which will be returned to Earth in a daring mid-air helicopter capture in September, are expected to show scientists the composition of the original solar nebula that formed the planets, asteroids, comets and the Sun • Sections of Britain's busy West Coast Main Line close today for upgrade work. When finished, the improved line should allow Virgin's tilting Pendolino trains to run at speeds of up to 200kph

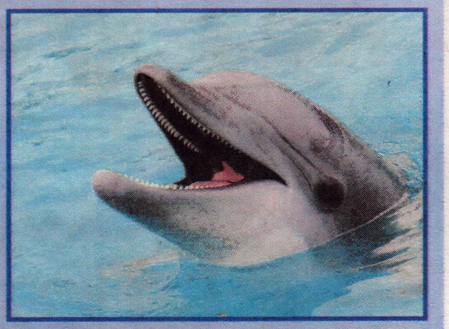
SATURDAY

The new 2.5 G-force Absolutely Insane catapult ride opens at Fantasy Island, Skegness

PICTURES PA/STEFAN ROUSSEAU

NEWS

Make a splash



Want to help protect dolphins and do your bit for the world's oceans? Then join WWF's Big Swim and help raise money and awareness about dolphins in our waters. Choose any day in May or June and any water-based activity, for which you can be sponsored, to raise money. June's a long way off, but if you start now it will give you plenty of time to get valuable sponsors. Find out more on www.wwf.org.uk/bigswim

Voucher power

Tesco's Computers for Schools still has four weeks to go – so keep collecting. One school that shows no sign of stopping is St Birinus School, in Didcot, which has been collecting vouchers since the start of the scheme 12 years ago. During that time, the Oxfordshire school has accumulated an incredible 348,000 vouchers, which have been exchanged for 21 computers, three digital cameras, 13 printers, three video recorders and two scanners! If you think your school can beat that, let us know.

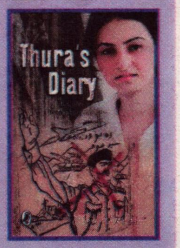
Smash hit

Brazilian footballer Ronaldinho found himself praying for forgiveness recently when he accidentally smashed a window at a 12th-century pilgrim shrine. The Barcelona midfielder, who was filming an advertisement in front of the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Madrid, performed a scissor kick and the ball broke a pane in the Portico de la Gloria [the Portal of Glory]. Luckily for the player, the glass wasn't from the 1100s but was a more modern addition

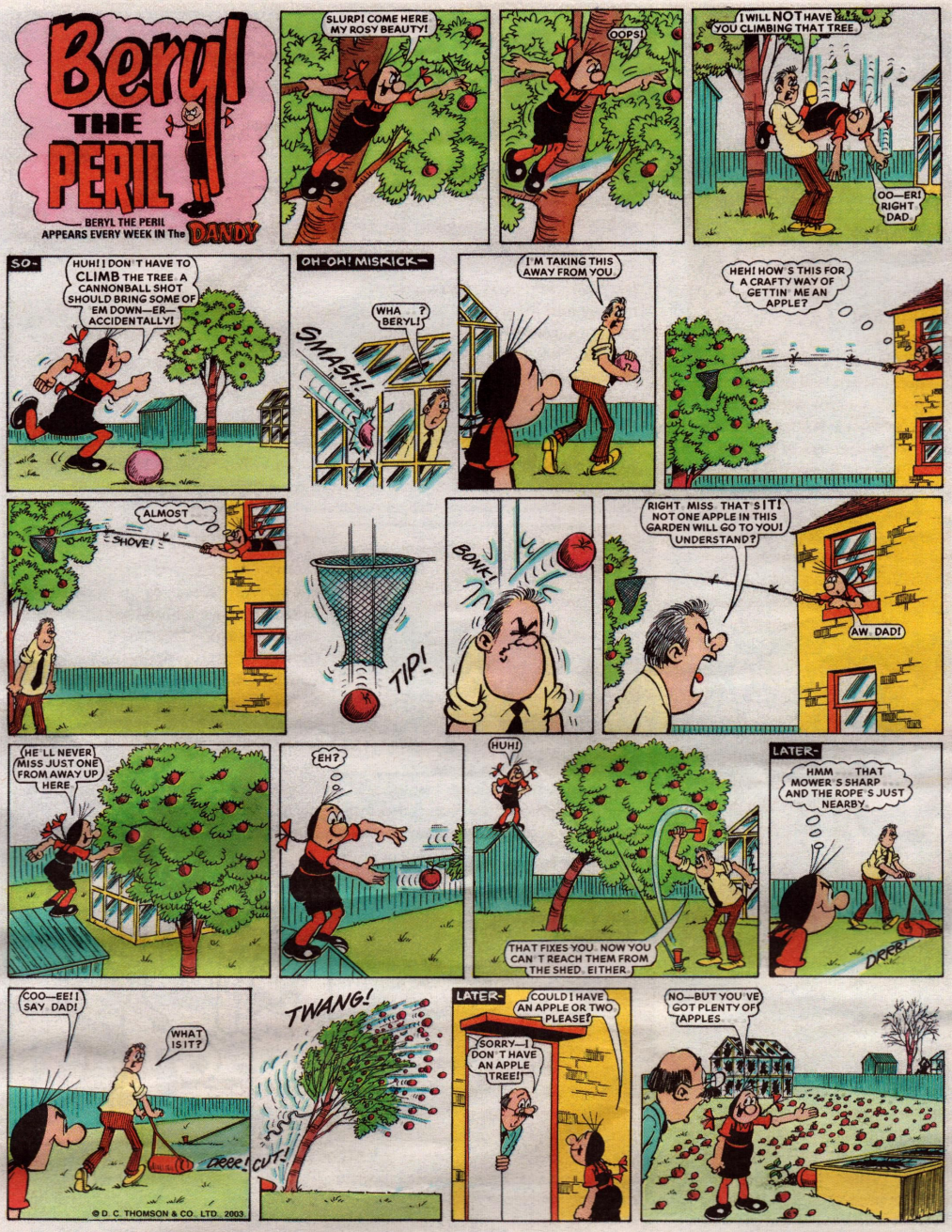
War diary

A year after the war in Iraq, new book Thura's Diary tells of 20-year-old Thura Al-Windawi's experiences of living in strife-torn Baghdad. "Obviously it was a difficult time," Thura tells Funday. "There were extremely hard days as well as terrifying, endless minutes when the bombs were falling. The diary was a way of dealing with the feelings I was experiencing during these horrible moments."

"I still have the diary, it's written in Arabic – not English," she continues. "Just by looking at it now I can tell that I was very nervous. By the handwriting and the fact I wasn't writing in pen but pencil, I see I'm scared." Now studying in America, Thura hopes readers will, through her remarkable account, realise the consequences of war. "I just really wish that people can see the devastation, confusion and terror that conflict brings."



Thura's Diary by Thura Al-Windawi [Puffin, £4.99] is in shops now



WORDWISE

Arabic

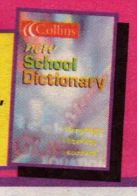
How much Arabic do you know? Well, here are some of the everyday English words that originate from Arabic.

alcove NOUN an area of a room which is set back slightly from the main part. **History:** from Arabic "al-qubbah" meaning "arch".

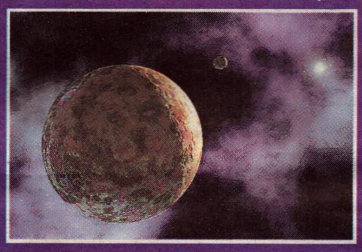
cotton NOUN 1 cotton is cloth made from the soft fibres of the cotton plant. 2 cotton is also the thread used for sewing. **History:** from Arabic "qutn".

sofa NOUN a long comfortable seat with a back and arms for two or three people. **History:** from Arabic "suffah" meaning "an upholstered raised platform".

Taken from Collins New School English Dictionary [2nd Edition, ISBN: 0-00-712636-0, paperback £5.99]



WOW!



Astronomers have recently discovered this object which, being a little smaller than Pluto and three times further away, could be the 10th planet in our solar system. This planetoid has been named Sedna

PICTURE: REUTERS/NASA AND CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

f-mail

SPIDER ACTION

There's no stopping Spider-Man and the webslinging superhero is back on DVD and VHS in Spider-Man – The New Animated Series [cert PG]. Out on April 5, this new 13-episode release uses top CGI animation so Spidey's looks his best while busting the bad guys! Thanks to Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, the star f-mailer will receive the Spider-Man – The New Animated Series DVD, a Spider-Man skateboard, helmet, mug, framed copy of the Daily Bugle, backpack and a CD soundtrack. The other f-mailers will get a Spider-Man T-shirt, Spider-Man money-box and a copy of the Spider-Man game on PS2 or PC.

STAR

Dear f-mail,
People don't actually care what Easter is about any more, all everyone wants are the chocolate eggs. It's important to try to understand what Easter Sunday is really about – Jesus rising again. But even the shops don't care because all they want to do is earn money but that's not what Easter is about. Loads of stores have been trying to sell tonnes of Easter eggs as soon as Christmas time was over. It's nice to have chocolate eggs to celebrate [of course!] but it also means people are being greedy and are taking Easter Day for granted, which is a real shame.
Sarah, Derbyshire

Elysia Sach, address not given

SPIDER-MAN CHARACTER: TM & ©2003 MARVEL CHARACTERS, INC. SPIDER-MAN SERIES: ©2003 ADELAIDE PRODUCTIONS, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Where in the world have you read Funday? Write in and tell us!

SCORPIA

Teen agent Alex Rider is back in his fifth deadly mission – Scorpia. Here's an exclusive extract from Anthony Horowitz's latest – its surprising twists will leave fans reeling

"I'm looking for Scorpia."

The man – Nile – smiled, showing perfect teeth. With the tiger neutralized, Alex was able to examine him more closely. Without the skin problem, he would be classically handsome. He was clean-shaven, elegant, in perfect physical shape. His hair was cut close to his skull, with a pattern of curving lines shaved around his ears. Although he looked relaxed, Alex knew that he was already in a combat stance, poised on the balls of his feet. This was a dangerous man; he radiated self-confidence and control. He wasn't alarmed to find a teenager here in the study. Instead he seemed to be amused.

Without the skin problem, he would be classically handsome. He was clean-shaven, elegant, in perfect physical shape

"What do you know about Scorpia?" the man asked. His voice was soft and very precise.

Alex said nothing.

"It's a name you overheard downstairs," Nile said. "Or perhaps you found it in the desk. Were you searching the desk? Is that why you're here? Are you a thief?"

"No."

Alex had already decided he'd had enough. Any minute now, someone else would arrive.

It was time to go. He turned away and began to move towards the door he had first come in.

"If you take one more step, I'm afraid I'll have to kill you," Nile warned.

Alex didn't pause.

He heard the light footfall on the wooden floor behind him and timed it exactly right. At the last moment, he stopped and swivelled round, lashing out with his heel in a back kick that should have driven into the man's abdomen, winding him at the very least, and possibly knocking him out. But with a sense of shock Alex felt his foot meet only empty air. Nile had either anticipated what he was about to do or twisted away with unbelievable speed.

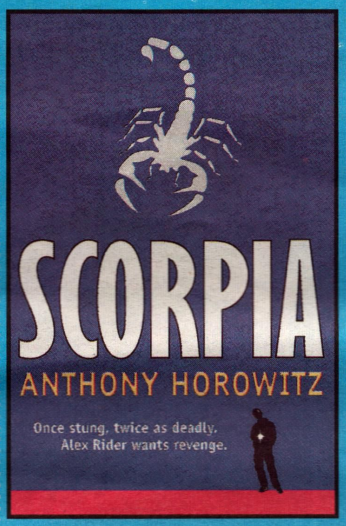
Alex turned full circle, trying to follow through with a front jab – the kizami-zuki – he had learnt in karate. But it was too late. Nile had dodged again and there was a blur of movement as the edge of his hand scythed down. It was like being hit by a block of wood. Alex was almost thrown off his feet. The whole room shuddered and went dark.

Desperately he tried to adopt a defensive position, crossing his arms, keeping his head low. Nile had been expecting it

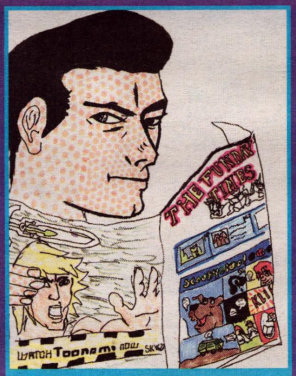
Desperately he tried to adopt a defensive position, crossing his arms, keeping his head low. Nile had been expecting it. Alex felt an arm close around his throat. A hand pressed against his head. With a single twist, Nile could now break his neck.

"You shouldn't have done that," Nile said, talking as if to a little child. "I did warn you and you didn't listen. So now you're dead."

There was a moment of blinding pain, a flash of white light. Then nothing.

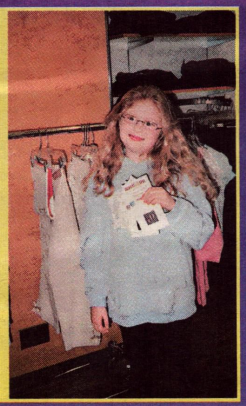


Scorpia by Anthony Horowitz [Walker Books, £5.99] is out on April 5



Sam Mardon, 13, Fulham

Dear f-mail,
Here's a picture of me spending my Gap vouchers in Exeter after winning Funday's design an Easter badge competition.
Lauren Mercer, Devon



Rebecca Wright, 9, Sanderstead, Surrey

Dear f-mail,
I live in India and my grandfather sends me The Funday Times. I go to a really cool American school in the Himalayas. Mount Everest is in the Himalayas and I often see snowy peaks as I walk the 10 minutes to school everyday. We also get cheeky monkeys in our garden and sometimes they steal food from us!
Kate Forbes, via e-mail

MAKING A SPLASH

Jason Page investigates the glory days of the magnificent Roman baths that gave the city of Bath in Somerset its name – and how they are making a comeback

When they weren't busy ruling their mighty empire [which stretched from England to Egypt], the Romans liked to let off steam with a relaxing bath. But having a bath in Roman times meant much more than just lying in a tub of soapy water. For the Romans, bathing was an important and elaborate ritual, which is why they built impressive public baths all over their empire. None was more impressive though, than those built by the Romans almost 2,000 years ago in the city now named in their honour, Bath.

The Roman baths in Bath were built at the site of a natural hot water spring, where water from more than 4,000m below the ground bubbles to the surface. The water is hot [46C to be precise] and contains 43 health-giving minerals. What's more, more than one million litres pour from the spring every day.

Before the arrival of the Romans, this part of the country was ruled by a Celtic tribe called the Dobunni who considered the spring to be sacred to a goddess named Sulis. The Romans began their conquest of Britain in AD43 and they didn't waste much time in realising the potential of this amazing natural resource. It is thought that construction of the baths at Bath had begun within 30 years of the Roman invasion of Britain.

The Romans began by building a reservoir around the spring to hold the water and stop it draining away. On one side of this reservoir they built a temple in honour of the Celtic goddess Sulis and her Roman equivalent, Minerva. On the other side, they built a large public bath, now known as the Great Bath. This was like a huge swimming pool and was filled with hot water from the spring.

During the following 200 years, the Romans expanded the baths, adding new rooms and pools. These improvements included the construction of changing rooms, a plunge pool filled with extremely cold water, a sauna [which the Romans called a laconicum], underfloor heating and a magnificent vaulted ceiling over the Great Bath. The baths were among the most impressive Roman buildings in the whole of Britain and they must have been some of most popular too.

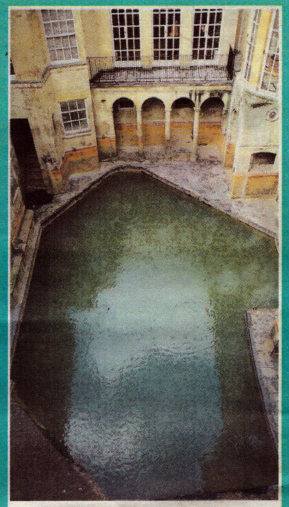
Why? Because the Romans loved bathing. It wasn't just about keeping clean. As well as having a wash or a relaxing massage, the baths were somewhere to meet friends, have something to eat, listen to philosophers debating ideas, play games, exercise or negotiate business deals. In fact, they were at the very heart of Roman life.

This way of life came to an end in Britain during the AD400s when the Roman Empire began to crumble. Saxon rulers who came after the Romans weren't nearly as keen on bathing – in fact, they were virtually against washing of any kind! Consequently, for the next 700 years the baths were neglected and by the time of the Norman Conquest, in 1066, they had become a crumbling ruin.

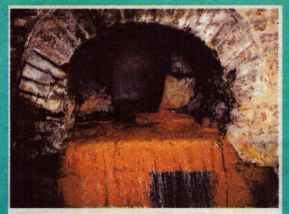
Fortunately, however, the story doesn't end there. The new Norman rulers built a new bath [known as the King's Bath] right on top of the spring, using the surviving walls of the old Roman reservoir. Gradually, the popularity of the baths grew once more as people from all over the country came to bathe in and drink the mineral-rich spring water hoping it would cure them of ailments and illnesses. By the end of the 18th century, the baths were as famous and fashionable as they had been in Roman times. Then, during the 1880s, work began to excavate some of the original roman buildings, including the spectacular Great Bath. The baths are now a popular tourist attraction. What's more, a new project is currently underway to use water from the hot spring in a nearby modern health spa. When completed later this year, visitors to Thermae Bath Spa will once again be able to bathe in the hot water springs!

For more info on the the Roman baths, click on www.romanbaths.co.uk The baths are are open every day [except for December 25 and 26] and children's tickets are £5

The Great Bath is the largest and most impressive pool in the Roman baths. It is 1.6m deep and lined with thick sheets of lead to prevent leaks. In Roman times, it was covered by a magnificent roof



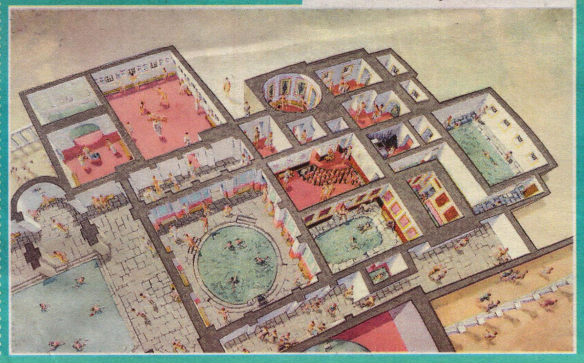
The King's Bath was built in the 12th century by the new Norman rulers of England. It was constructed on top of the spring and re-used the walls of the Roman-built reservoir. Around the sides of the baths are niches in which bathers sat



This overflow carries excess water from the spring away from the baths and down a drain to the River Avon. It still works today – 2,000 years after it was built by the Romans. The orange staining on the rocks is caused by iron dissolved in the spring water

Like the Celts before them, the Romans regarded the hot water spring as a sacred site and would make offerings to the gods by throwing things into it. These are some of the things archaeologists have recovered from the spring

This illustration shows what the entire bathing complex at Bath would have looked like in the days of the Romans



THE MONTH

Put the disc in your computer and bring Funday to life ...

To find out more about Roman bathing habits, pop The Month CD-Rom that came with today's paper into your PC and click on the Kids zone. You can explore a Roman Villa with your mouse to get the lowdown on Roman life at home

PICTURES: BROADAR BATH MUSEUM, BATH COUNCIL

FRESH! WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT THIS WEEK

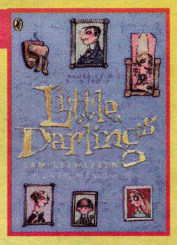
SINGLE

5 COLOURS IN HER HAIR McFly
Currently stealing the limelight with their support slot on Busted's UK tour, McFly may look a bit like their musical mentors, but this single actually sounds better than early Busted tracks. The guitar-based thrashy pop sound is strikingly familiar, but the boys have better voices than Busted – so Charlie, Matt and James had better watch out!

DVD/VHS

SPELLBOUND [cert U]
Only in America could an Oscar-nominated documentary be made about a national spelling competition, where a young champion is found during a tense live final on national TV. Fascinating and absorbing, the dedication of the eight pupils the camera follows – and the unbelievable words they spell – make this compelling. R-E-C-O-M-M-E-N-D-E-D.

BOOK



LITTLE DARLINGS by Sam Llewellyn
It's impossible not to notice the similarities between Little Darlings and Lemony Snicket, with its three sibling stars, nasty relatives and far-fetched story. But while you sympathise with the Baudelaire orphans, Cassian, Primrose and Daisy Darling are nanny-electrocuting, car-stealing terrors who are hard to care about. It's okay, but not An Unfortunate Event.

SINGLE

TAKE YOUR MAMA Scissor Sisters
Scissor Sisters ricochet listeners in an audio/visual timewarp back to the 1970s, when rock was glam and fashion was seriously out there. This honky-tonk rock track will have parents musing: "This reminds me of ..." But don't let that put you off. It's retro cool at its best because it's strangely original too. Flares optional – but you could pop a flower in your hair.

FILM

THE CAT IN THE HAT [cert PG]
Far from a faithful adaptation of Dr Seuss' book, The Cat in the Hat movie is a brasher, ruder affair. Mike Myers as The Cat will split audiences – some will find his hammy naughtiness funny, others won't. The set design is visually striking and Dakota Fanning and Spencer Breslin add sweetness – but it's not the cat's whiskers.

CAMERA

Q1 DIGITAL
Funday loved the curvy looks and simplicity of the original Q1 and now Fujifilm is taking the cute camera into the digital age. It has a two megapixel image resolution, a sharp 3.8cm colour screen and 4x digital zoom – producing impressive pics. At a snappy £99.99, the Q1 Digital is a great introduction to digital photography.

DVD/VHS

GOOD BOY! [cert U]
Cute dogs in films are always a hit, especially when they can talk, and this fun family fantasy is a real Easter treat. Young Owen [well-played by Liam Aiken] must help his dog from space, Hubble, whip Earth mutts into shape before a visit by the dog leader from planet Sirius. It's soppy at times but this is well *woof* a look.

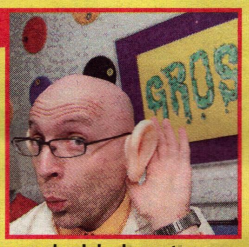
SINGLE

SUNRISE Norah Jones
Even if Norah's free-flowing style isn't to your taste, it's easy to hear on Sunrise why she's enjoying such success. This track has a light and breezy tone, with Norah's effortless-sounding vocals draped playfully over the top. The whole production oozes with musical talent, and the song was written by Norah and her bass player Lee Alexander.

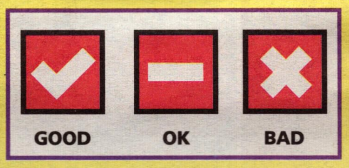
SINGLE

SOMEONE LIKE ME Atomic Kitten
Atomic Kitten say they're taking a career break, but it looks a little more final than that, with the release of this slushy single [complete with a career highlights scrapbook video] and a greatest hits album next month. Thumbs up to the songwriter, this is a great track, but the girls' trembling verses highlight the flimsy vocal skills on which the band are based.

TV



GROSS!
Discovery Kids' new series Gross! [starts April 5, at 4.15pm] investigates our body's disgusting functions such as burping, vomiting, bogeys, spots etc. Presented by Jason Bradbury, this show needs a lot more science and far less of the toilet humour. The sort of programme parents will hate ... and probably a fair few kids too. Yuk!



PICTURES ©TM AND ©2003 DREAMWORKS LLC, EMI AND AFFILIATED LABELS

WIN IT!

BLOWN AWAY

British Wind Energy Association [BWEA] is challenging creative kids throughout Britain to draw, paint or photograph their unique visions of wind energy.
Budding artists can simply log on to www.catch-the-wind.com to download an entry form. The website is packed with fun tips and interesting facts about wind energy. The winning designs that blow the judges away will be displayed in a national exhibition at the Science Museum and Eureka! The Museum for Children.
To celebrate the launch of Catch The Wind and www.catch-the-wind.com, three readers will each win a Fuji S3000 digital camera and an HQ M-Energy RTF stunt kite.
Plus, three runners-up will win the kite.

To enter, tell us the scale used to measure the wind speed.

Mark your entry WIND and send it, together with your name, age, address and home telephone number, to the competition address on page 2.

FIXTURE LIST

This week's sporting action

TODAY

First Test, Pakistan v India

The one-day international series between Pakistan and India was the first time either of these cricket-crazy nations toured their rival country in 14 years. It produced some dazzling cricket. Hopefully, the three-match Test series, starting in Multan, will produce equally tense matches. Live on Sky Sports 2, from 4.30am

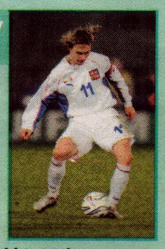
Arsenal v Manchester United, Highbury

The Gunners have played some breathtaking football this season with Thierry Henry [right] leading the way. A few weeks ago this would have been the championship decider, now it could be United's chance to salvage some pride after a poor season. Live on Sky Sports 1, kick-off 4.05pm

The 150th Boat Race

Last year's Boat Race was the closest in the event's history with the dark blues of Oxford [right] pipping the light blues of Cambridge. First held in 1829, the famous university race – along 6.5km of the Thames – is now screened in more than 130 countries worldwide. Watch it live on BBC1, at 6pm

WEDNESDAY



International football, Republic of Ireland v Czech Republic

Brian Kerr and his Irish team may not be going to Portugal but Lansdowne Road hosts a Czech side which could be the Euro 2004 dark horse. With the likes of European Player of the Year Pavel Nedved [above], Milan Baros and Jan Koller, the Czechs have attacking skill, pace and power. Live on Sky Sports 2, kick-off 7.30pm

International football, Sweden v England

Sven-Goran Eriksson [right] returns to his homeland as both sides prepare for Euro 2004 with this friendly in Gothenberg. England's recent friendlies have been farcical, with their numerous substitutions, and with big Champions League and FA Cup games coming up, expect plenty more. Live on Sky Sports 1, kick-off 8.45pm

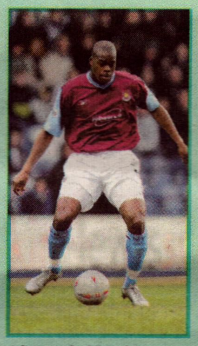
THURSDAY

Third Test, West Indies v England

This penultimate and crucial Test is being held at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados. The Windies will hope that Fidel Edwards' [right] back injury has cleared up as the pacy bowler looked threatening in the First Test before half-brother Pedro Collins stepped in to replace him. Live coverage on Sky Sports 2

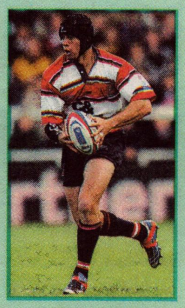
SATURDAY

Nationwide League Division One, Reading v West Ham



As the race for the Division One play-off places hots up, this game is a real cliffhanger. A win by either side and the play-offs edge nearer. West Ham have the league's top strikeforce in Marlon Harewood [above] and Bobby Zamora but the Hammers are also inconsistent. The match is live on Sky Sports 2, kick-off 12.30pm

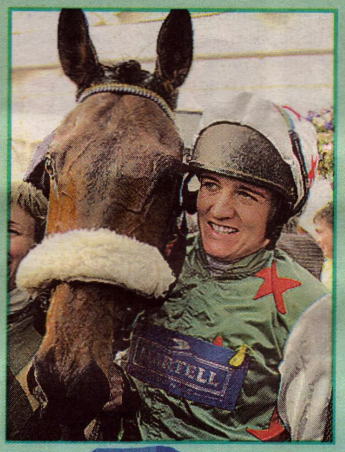
Zurich Premiership, Saracens v Gloucester



Gloucester are still in the hunt for a Premiership play-off place with four matches to go. With tough games against Bath and Wasps to come, the West Country team – which includes Henry Paul [above] – will look for maximum points against the underperforming Saracens. Kick-off is at 2.45pm, live in Sky Sports 3

The Grand National

Monty's Pass ridden by jockey Barry Geraghty [below] stormed to victory in last year's Grand National at Aintree. But which horse and rider will triumph on the world-famous but gruelling 7km, 28-fence course in 2004? As usual, the answer is probably anybody's guess! Watch the race live on BBC1, at 3.45pm



PICTURES: REUTERS/PETER MACDIARMID/DARREN STAPLES/MATTHEW ROBERTS/ANDY CLARK, AP/PAUL ELLIS, ©EMPICS

©Times Newspapers Ltd. 2004. Artwork and transparencies are submitted at the owner's risk and neither The Sunday Times nor its agents accept any liability for loss or damage. Published and printed and licensed for distribution in electronic and all other derivative forms by Times Newspapers Ltd. PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E98 1ST UK, tel 020 7782 5000, and also printed at Killing Road, Prescot, Merseyside L34 9HN UK. Not to be sold separately from The Sunday Times.

PRESS PAWS

Prepare for a canine caper that's out of this world as Good Boy! [cert U] is available to rent and own on DVD and VHS from tomorrow.

Liam Aiken stars as 12-year-old Owen, who discovers his dog Hubble [voiced by Matthew Broderick] is a talking interplanetary scout from the Dog Star Sirius. He must help his pet pooch from space recruit some mutts for a visit by the dog leader – the Greater Dane.

It's furry fun for all the family!

Thanks to MGM Home Entertainment, one Funday reader will win a Philips widescreen TV and home cinema system [with surround sound and six speakers]. The winner will also receive a Good Boy! goody bag which includes: the Good Boy! DVD [packed with fun extras], watch, Easter egg, face paints, puzzle, key-ring and lunch-box.

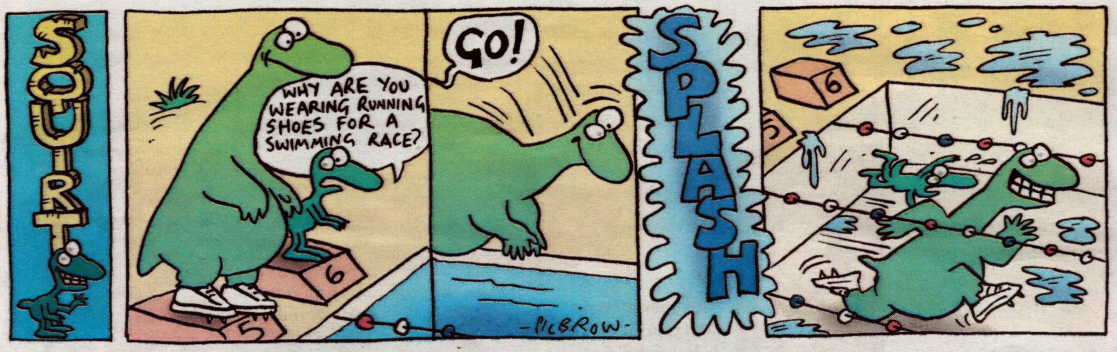
Plus, 15 runners-up will win the Good Boy! goody bag.

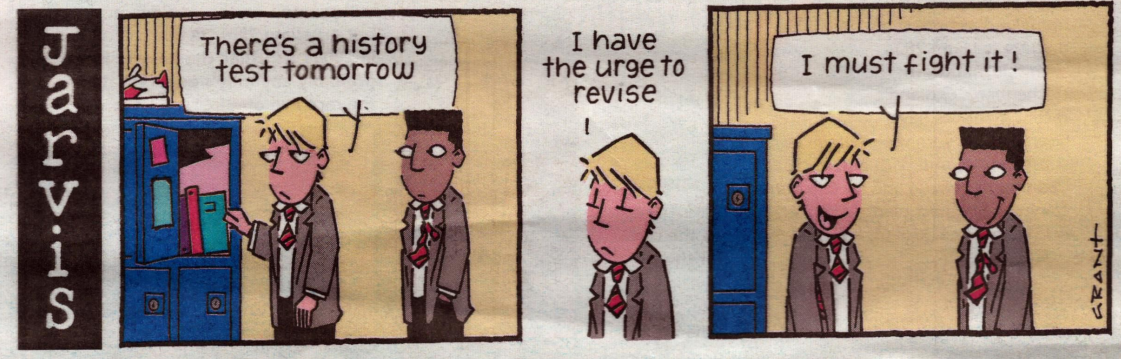
To enter, tell us the name of the famous dog show held at Birmingham NEC each year

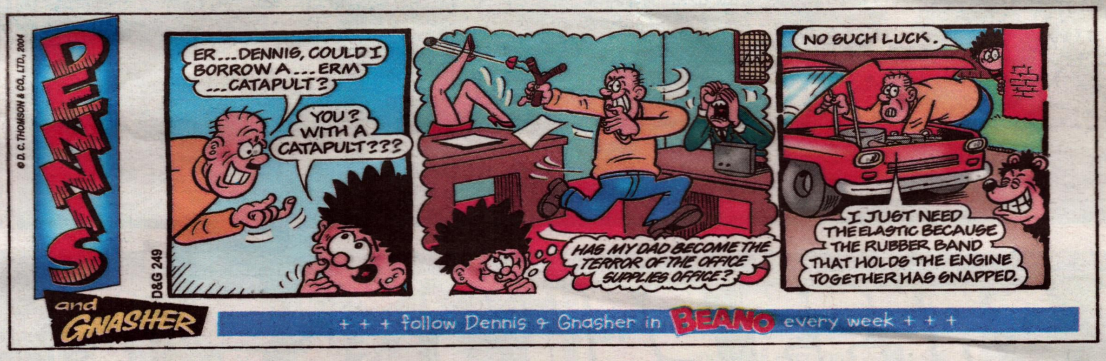
Mark your entry GOOD BOY! and send it, together with your name, age, address and home telephone number, to the competition address on page 2.

Normal TNL competition rules apply to all Funday Times competitions

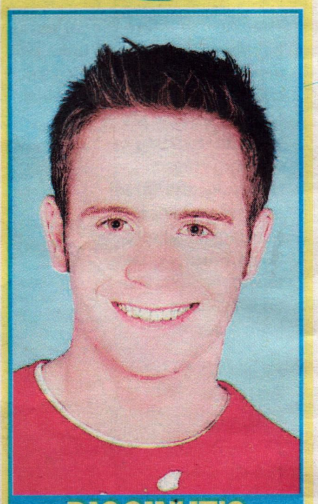
You could be a competition winner!







QF QUICK FIRE



DIGGIN' IT'S LIAM DOLAN

PICTURE: ©DISNEY

How tidy was your room when you left home this morning?
There were a few clothes lying around because I was rushing to go to work and it was early.

What CD is on your player at the moment?
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. I want to be Joseph.

Which TV programmes do you catch if you can?
EastEnders, Friends and, of course, Diggin' It.

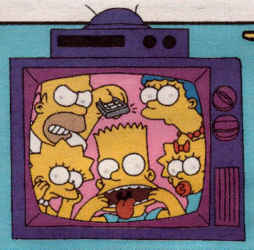
Who's the most intriguing celebrity you have ever met and why?
Not so much intriguing, but I was very interested in meeting Gareth Gates, Darius and Peter Andre because I'm a huge fan of Pop Idol and I'm a Celebrity .. Get Me Out Of Here!

What have you been putting off doing recently that you really ought to get on with?
I have been meaning to sort out all my receipts for my accounts. I've been saying that since last April.

When are you happiest?
When I'm with my friends or family and we're having a laugh.

What's your motto for life?
Dream, believe and it's yours.

Squirt's fallen flat on his face again!



THE SIMPSONS™ PRESENT LONG-WINDED LIMERICKS

THERE IS A BARTENDER NAMED MOE,
WHO HATES WHEN BUSINESS IS SLOW
SO HE'LL ROUSE UP THE SOTS,
WITH A COUPLE OF SHOTS,
AND SOON HE'S REGAINED STATUS QUO!

BLAM!

WAKE UP, YOU DEADBEATS! YOU AIN'T BOUGHT NOTHIN' FOR OVER AN HOUR!

IF YOU WANNA SLEEP IN MY PLACE, YOU HAVE TO MAKE SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS LIKE BARNEY, THERE

TO SPRINGFIELD PENITENTIARY WENT SNAKE,
FOR SELLING I.D.'S THAT WERE FAKE
JAIL WON'T BRING HIM DOWN,
HE'LL BE GOING TO TOWN,
CAUSE EVERY GUARD THERE'S ON THE TAKE!

YOUR CAR, SIR

DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME, DUDE I'M CATCHING THE MID-NIGHT FLOOR-SHOW AT THE COPA!

PROFESSOR FRINK, A GENIUS OF SORTS,
HAS A PROBLEM WITH ELECTRICAL SHORTS
NOT THE KIND THAT PLAGUE TOASTERS,
OR THE INTERNET POSTERS
BUT THE KIND HE INVENTED FOR SPORTS!

GANGWAY! THERE SEEMS TO BE A SLIGHT NNG MALFUNCTION, RESULTING IN SOME HITTING AND HURTING, WITH THE FRICTION AND THE BURNING! EH-HOY!

FROM INDIA COMES MISTER APU
HE'LL SELL YOU ALL KINDS OF TOFU
TOFU CUPCAKES AND PUDDINGS,
POT PIES AND PAN DUMPLINGS,
PLUS A TERRIFIC NEW TOFU SHAMPOO!

WHEN THE TOFU IS BUBBLING, YOU KNOW IT IS WORKING!

SQUISHE

TOFU SQUISHEE

SOY SQUIS

TOFU BARS

Your Tofu H.Q.

TOFU IN A DRUM

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT'S NOT LARD!

TOFU MINTS

MARTIN PRINCE HAS GREAT TROUBLES IN GYM,
OTHER BOYS LIKE TO MAKE SPORT OF HIM
A WET WEDGIE'S NO PLEASURE,
NOR SWIRLIES FOR GOOD MEASURE,
('THOUGH THE EXERCISE MAY HELP HIM SLIM!)

THERE HE IS, DUDES! AFTER HIM!

I ASSURE YOU, FELLOWS I REALLY WOULDN'T MAKE A VERY GOOD MEDICINE BALL!

DOCTOR HIBBERT WILL OPEN UP WIDE,
AND LET LOOSE A LAUGH DIGNIFIED
HE'LL LAUGH AT A VIRUS,
BLEEDING ULCER OR EYE-PUS,
OR A SURGICAL GLOVE LEFT INSIDE!

WHAT YOU HAVE HERE IS WHAT WE IN THE MEDICAL PROFESSION CALL "*LATEXIS ERRONEUS*"

FROM NOW ON, WE'LL HAVE TO CALL YOU "*STRETCH*"! HOO-HOO, HA-HA-HA-HA!

IT'S THE *NICKNAME* I'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF!

MATT GROENING

THERE IS A YOUNG FELLOW NAMED BART,
WHO THINKS HIS GRAFFITI IS ART
HIS CHOICE CANVAS IS SCHOOL,
TEACHERS SAY IT'S UNCOOL,
BUT HE WON'T TAKE DETENTION TO HEART!

BART SIMPSON! THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A PLACE OF LEARNING, BUT WE PREFER CHILDREN DON'T LEARN THOSE KIND OF THINGS HERE!

THERE WAS A YOUNG MAN FROM NANTUCKET,

BUT, MRS. KRABAPPEL! YOU SAID WE CAN NEVER GO WRONG WITH THE CLASSICS!

THE END

Story: McCann Art: Ortiz/Rote ©1999 BONGO ENTERTAINMENT, INC. THE SIMPSONS ©&TM TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX FILM CORPORATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

THE POWER TO BUILD...
...IN YOUR POCKET
NEW LEGO® X-POD
WHAT WILL YOU MAKE?
LEGO
play on™
4346 Robots
4347 Vehicles
4348 Planes
4349 Creatures
With a new LEGO® X-Pod in your pocket, you can build hundreds of micro-models wherever you are! Cars, planes, robots or wacky creatures - with four sets to collect, you decide. Be smart and include the pod in your cool creations, or combine pods and pieces to build even bigger and better. New LEGO X-Pod - build it, take it, remake it!
www.LEGO.com/create
Models shown cannot necessarily be built simultaneously.
Toys not shown to scale. LEGO, the LEGO logo, the brick configuration and PLAY ON are trademarks of the LEGO Group. ©2004 The LEGO Group. 4248300/04-EUN